

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-11 and 14–29 are now pending. Claims 21 corresponds to claim 9, but depends from claim 6. Claims 22-23 correspond to claim 18, but depend respectively from claims 15 and 16. Claims 24-26 correspond to claim 19, but depend respectively from claims 15-17. New claims 27-29 correspond to claim 20, but depend respectively from claims 15-17.

The Examiner noted applicant's election of the Group I invention, claims 1-11 and 14-20 and withdrew claims 12 and 13 from consideration. In view of the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter, non-elected claims 12 and 13 have been canceled above without prejudice. Applicant reserves the right to file a divisional application directed to the subject matter of those non-elected and now canceled claims.

The Examiner noted that the Abstract should be in narrative form and limited to 150 words. The original Abstract has been deleted and a new Abstract in compliance with the Examiner's requirement is submitted herewith. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the Abstract is solicited.

Original claims 1-11 and 14-20 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The claims have been carefully reviewed and revised bearing in mind the Examiner's comments. It is noted that e.g., claim 1 has been amended to refer to removal of a portion of and/or reduction in the thickness of the sheath of the fiber optic. It is to be recognized in this regard that "sheath" as used herein corresponds to the technical term "cladding". It is believed that all claims are now in full compliance with 35 USC 112, all paragraphs, and it is therefore respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn. If there are any remaining objections to the claims it is respectfully requested that the undersigned be contacted by telephone such

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that the claims can be revised as required to place this application in condition for allowance.

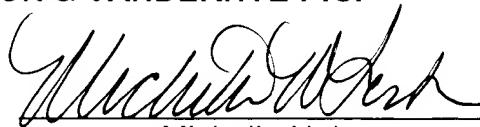
Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 1-11 and 14-20 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the Examiner's rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. The claims having been revised to address the Examiner's formal rejections are submitted to be in condition for allowance.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and an early Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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